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EXAMINER

STERRETT, JONATHAN G

ART UNIT

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3623

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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/070,731	<b>Applicant(s)</b> NAKAGAWA ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> JONATHAN G. STERRETT	<b>Art Unit</b> 3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 December 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,4,5,8-13,16,17,19-27,29-34 and 44-46 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 4, 5, 8-13, 16, 17, 19-27, 29-34 and 44-46 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |                                                                                      |                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)          | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____                                                          | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

### ***Summary***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 12-29-08 has been entered.

2. This **Non-Final Office Action** is response to the amendment of 29 December 2008. **Claims 1, 4, 5, 8-13, 16, 17, 19-27, 29-34 and 44-46** are pending in the application.

### ***Response to Arguments***

3. The applicants' arguments have been fully considered but are moot in view of new grounds of rejection.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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5. **Claims 1, 4, 5, 8-13, 16, 17, 19-27, 29-34 and 44-46** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Brown US 5,923,552** (hereinafter **Brown**) in view of **Coburn US 6,618,856** (hereinafter **Coburn**)

Regarding **Claim 1**, Brown teaches:

**a work control location for compulsory and continuously instructing the progress of work and monitoring its progress to the plurality of work executing sites while linking them with each other,**

column 4 line 3-7, the home builder (i.e the work control site) instructs the progress of work and monitors progress of the suppliers (see also column 4 line 60-64, supplier schedules who are providing components to a product fabricator).

column 9 line 32-35, the distributed scheduling subsystem links the members together through the interrelated product schedules.

**A communications network exchanging managing information relating to the instructions and to the monitoring between the work control location and the plurality of different work executing locations.**

column 9 line 32-35, the distributed scheduling subsystem uses Critical Path Management (CPM) to direct exchange of information and monitoring between collaborative parties (i.e. members who are working together to support an overall project plan). – see column 10 line 18, the other parties who are working collaboratively at their location to support the schedule are network members, i.e. they communicate over a network – see also column 5 line 48-52, the system provides a network service

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distribution system for coordinating schedules among suppliers – this system is a communications network – see also column 6 line 55-58, the calendar system (that the separated parties use at their worksites for communicating progress and schedule updates with each other, is a network interface – thus there is a communications network).

**wherein the work control site systematically plans and sets flows of execution of work to be assigned to the plurality of working executing sites for a work process**

column 7 line 58-63, the fabrication schedule is communicated to the suppliers (i.e. the working executing sites) who are responsible for their part of the schedule (i.e. the flow of execution that is their work process).

**and instructs the progress of the set flows of execution and monitors the progress of the flows of execution.**

column 8 line 7-12, the establishment of restrictive links and the monitoring of these links between members monitors the progress of the flows of execution as each member contributes to the progress of the project they are supporting

**wherein the work control site includes a work information displaying means for providing work information set for said work executing sites to the work executing sites,**

column 6 line 58-60, a calendar of tasks is provided to display to the various collaborating parties tasks and work stages necessary for carrying out their tasks in support of the project.

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**a notification displaying means for notifying the work executing sites of the work information,**

column 7 line 30-35, the messages regarding work tasks are received and appear (i.e. are displayed as notification) as requiring attention. See column 7 line 10-13 – suppliers confirm delivery dates after receiving notification.

**and a confirmation displaying means for confirming responses from work executing sites regarding notifications by said notification displaying means.**

column 7 line 10-13, confirmations are sent from the other suppliers (e.g. a confirmation regarding material delivery).

**wherein the provision of the work information by the work information displaying means is performed on web pages in synchronization with the work information notified by the notification displaying means.**

see column 4 line 60-65; column 7 line 30-35, notification is synchronized by messages appearing as calendar entries that notify members that an action is required. The calendar entries providing work information as to what the tasks are.

Brown teaches communicating work information to various sites so that different suppliers can integrate their schedules with a master schedule (e.g. for a home building or a product fabricator).

Brown teaches using a communications network to connect the work locations and the work control location (column 5 line 30-34).

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Brown does not teach where the locations are websites and where the notification and confirmation are performed on the internet, however it is old and well known in the art to exchange work information between websites on the internet (i.e. a communications network) to connect locations together. The internet provides the capability to efficiently connect different locations together using websites and to communicate information between those locations because it provides coverage that is worldwide.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Brown, regarding providing for geographically dispersed work locations to be connected together using a network, to connect those locations together using websites and providing the notification and confirmation using the internet, because it would provide the world wide coverage of the internet to connect the worksites together.

Brown teaches notifying various parties of issues with schedules but does not teach:

**notification displaying means, wherein when there is a notification, at a work control site the notification includes at least one of a contrasting color on a display, flashing text on a display, sound emission, and vibration, such that the notification is forcibly made to the work executing site and the work executing site is made to notice the notification.**

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Coburn teaches:

**notification displaying means, wherein when there is a notification, at a work control site the notification includes at least one of a contrasting color on a display, flashing text on a display, sound emission, and vibration, such that the notification is forcibly made to the work executing site and the work executing site is made to notice the notification**

column 109 line 20-25, a display using contrasting and flashing colors to highlight a failure or error in the system.

Brown and Coburn are analogous art because they both teach using computer systems to manage the activities of workers. Coburn's teachings regarding the use of a display to notify workers that there is a problem or an error are reasonably pertinent since they show how a computer display may use a graphical technique to highlight a default.

Thus it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Brown regarding coordinating the activities of workers to include the step of using graphical techniques to provide notification, as taught by Coburn, because it would have provided a predictable result in notifying workers that something relative to their work was wrong. Brown teaches the need to notify workers so that the coordination of their schedules is achieved. Brown teaches that complex interrelated activities between different parties requires a high level of



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coordination. This coordination is provided through notifying parties when one schedule is delayed and would affect others. Coburn's teaching of using graphical indicators is reasonably pertinent since it shows how a computer display can be used to highlight something that needs attention. Thus the combination of Brown and Coburn would provide a predictable result through using display techniques to highlight schedule deficiencies or issues to those working in a coordinated fashion.

Regarding **Claim 4**, Brown teaches:

**wherein the work information is one or both of the content of the work and a work schedule relating to the progress of the work.**

column 7 line 5-10, the work information communicated to and from the suppliers includes schedules (i.e. tasks that represent the content of the work) so that coordination can be achieving between the main site and the supplier.

Regarding **Claim 5**, Brown teaches a desktop calendar system and a network service distribution system for coordinating geographically dispersed activities. Brown teaches that his invention operates over a computer network.

While Brown teaches the notification and confirming displaying means as discussed in Claim 4 above, Brown does not teach using the internet or web pages for displaying confirmation or notification.

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However, it is old and well known in the art for web pages (i.e. browsers) to be used to display notification and confirmation. The internet provides the benefit of widespread availability since it is available around the world.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Brown, regarding providing for geographically dispersed project collaboration and communication, including confirmation and notification, to include the step of displaying the notification and confirmation displays using web pages accessed over the internet, because it would provide widespread, around-the-world availability to Brown's project collaboration invention.

;

Regarding **Claim 8**, Brown teaches:

**wherein when there is provision of information; this provision of information is informed by a signal of a mode of expression, different from normal.**

column 7 line 30-32, the appearance of calendar entries identifying tasks to be done (i.e. work information) requiring attention are different than normal since they indicate that something new is required.

Regarding **Claim 9**, Brown teaches displaying in parallel the work tasks (i.e. flows of execution) assigned to all the members (i.e. work executing sites) and provides

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this in common to all the work executing sites (see column 9 line 32-37). See Figure 2B where interdependencies between the schedules of individual project members are displayed. While Brown teaches the need to communicate between network members supporting a project, and displaying in parallel the flows of execution so that interrelated schedules can be communicated (see column 9 line 38-40). Brown does not teach displaying the schedules on web pages to the work executing sites.

However, it is old and well known in the art to display information on webpages. The internet provides for the ability to receive and display information using a browser (i.e. a web page) on a worldwide basis (i.e. world wide web).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Brown, regarding providing for geographically dispersed project collaboration and communication, including displaying the project execution flows in parallel, to include the step of using web pages accessed over the internet, because it would provide widespread, around-the-world availability to Brown's project collaboration invention.

Regarding **Claim 10**, Brown teaches:

**wherein, when there is a change in the work information,  
the work control site reports this change all at once to the work executing sites**

column 9 line 32-36, changes in schedule (i.e. tasks that have to be completed according to timing, i.e. the tasks are work information) are automatically communicated to other work sites, i.e. this information is reported so as to maintain an integrated schedule and ensure updates do not result in unresolvable scheduling conflicts (see column 11 line 45-50).

Column 12 line 64-66, unresolved conflicts may result in new suppliers being RFQ'ed.-see also column 8 line 50-55.

**and simultaneously receives a plurality of responses when requesting responses from the work executing sites about the report.**

column 8 line 60-63, changes in schedule involving a bid request (i.e. a request for quotation), receive a plurality of responses from those network members receiving the bid requests (i.e. a request to respond).

Regarding **Claim 11**, Brown teaches providing a communications network that provides notification about scheduling to network members and information regarding work information for network members to maintain their compliance with a schedule. As discussed above, Brown teaches providing notification that is different from normal (see column 7 line 29-33) and in providing work information to network members related to the notification. Brown does not teach using a web page containing a clickable link to display notification information and a clickable link to provide work information.

However, using clickable links in a web browser to display information in separate browser windows when a user is using the internet is old and well known in the art. This method of communication using the internet provides an easy to use interface to communicate information.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Brown, regarding providing notification that is different from normal (see column 7 line 29-33) and in providing work information to network members related to the notification, to include the step of using clickable links to provide the notification and work information related to the notification, because it would provide an easy to use interface to communicate information.

Regarding **Claim 12**, Brown teaches providing a communications network that provides information regarding work information for network members to maintain their compliance with a schedule. As discussed above, Brown teaches providing notification that is different from normal (see column 7 line 29-33) and in providing work information to network members related to the notification. Brown teaches that the notification of work information may include launching additional applications that provide the work information (i.e. in resolving the notification message). Brown does not teach using a web page containing a clickable link to provide work information.

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However, using clickable links in a web browser to display information in separate browser windows when a user is using the internet is old and well known in the art. This method of communication using the internet provides an easy to use interface to communicate information.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Brown, regarding providing notification that is different from normal (see column 7 line 29-33) and in providing work information to network members related to the notification, to include the step of using clickable links to provide the additional work information related to the notification, because it would provide an easy to use interface to communicate information.

**Claims 13, 16, 17, 19-27, 29- 34 and 44-46** recite similar limitations as those recited in **Claims 1, 4, 5, 8-12** above, and are therefore rejected under the same rationale.

### ***Conclusion***

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jonathan G. Sterrett whose telephone number is 571-272-6881. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-6.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Beth Boswell can be reached on 571-272-6737. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JGS 1-28-09 /JGS/

/Jonathan G. Sterrett/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3623